

**U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT  
ENFORCEMENT AND REMOVAL OPERATIONS  
ICE HEALTH SERVICE CORPS**

**IHSC Use of Social Media**

**IHSC Directive: 01-22**

**ERO Directive Number: 11766.2**

**Federal Enterprise Architecture Number: 306-112-002b**

**Effective: 13 January 2015**

---

**By Order of the Assistant Director**

**Jon R. Krohmer, MD/s/**

---

- 1. PURPOSE:** This issuance sets forth the policies and procedures regarding the authorized use, prohibitions, and precautions of government-provided communication systems. IHSC supports the appropriate use of social media to enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange; streamline processes; and foster productivity in the work environment. This directive establishes IHSC's position on the utility and management of social media and provides guidance on its management, administration, and oversight. This directive is not meant to address one particular form of social media; rather, social media in general, acknowledges that advances in technology will occur and that new tools will emerge. For the purposes of this directive, the term social media includes e-mail communications, electronic newsletters, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner.
- 2. APPLICABILITY:** This directive applies to all IHSC personnel, including but not limited to, Public Health Service (PHS) officers, and contract support staff. It is applicable to IHSC personnel supporting healthcare operations in both ICE-owned and contractor- owned detention facilities and to IHSC Headquarters staff. This directive applies to contract personnel supporting IHSC when granted the privilege of usage of a government-provided e-mail communication system and/or other types of social media. Federal contractors are responsible for the management and discipline of its employees supporting IHSC.
- 3. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES:**
  - 3-1.** Directive 110-1, Department of Homeland Security Privacy Policy for Operational Use of Social Media.
  - 3-2.** DHS 4300A, Sensitive Systems Handbook, Appendix H: Social Media, July 24, 2012.

**4. POLICY:** Social media is an efficient and timely communication tool that is provided by DHS to IHSC personnel to assist them in supporting IHSC functions and conducting the government's business within its own organization, with government and private business partners, and with the public. Appropriate use of the social media can enhance productivity and intra-governmental communication.

**4-1. Overview.** IHSC personnel are provided e-mail and other social media platforms for business use. Social media users bear sole responsibility for material they access and send via e-mail. Allowable uses of social media include:

- a. Communication and information exchange directly related to the mission, charter, or work tasks of IHSC;
- b. Research and information exchange in support of standards, analysis, advisory and professional development activities related to the user's IHSC duties;
- c. Announcement of IHSC procedures, policies, rules, services, programs, information, and activities; and
- d. Other governmental administration communications not requiring a high level of security.

**4-2. On the Job Use.**

- a. All IHSC social media sites or pages will be approved by the ICE Chief Information Officer, or his or her designee, and shall be administered by ICE information services section, or as otherwise determined;
- b. IHSC's social media page will include an introductory statement that clearly specifies the purpose and scope of IHSC's presence on the website;
- c. IHSC page(s) may be used to link to the ICE official website;
- d. Social media content will adhere to applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including all information technology and records management policies;
- e. IHSC personnel will conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the IHSC; and accordingly will adhere to all DHS/ICE standards of conduct and observe conventionally accepted protocols and proper decorum;
- f. IHSC personnel will not make statements about any detainees, the guilt or innocence of any suspect or arrestee, or comments concerning pending prosecutions; nor post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate classified or sensitive information, including photographs or videos, related to

department training, activities, or work-related assignments without express written permission;

- g. IHSC personnel will not conduct political activities or private business;
- h. IHSC personnel use of personally owned devices to manage IHSC social media activities, or in the course of official duties, is prohibited without express written permission; and
- i. IHSC personnel will observe and abide by all copyright, trademark, and service mark restrictions in posting materials to electronic media.

**4-3. DHS MD-4600.1, Personal Use of Government Office Equipment.**

DHS social media platforms, to include e-mail systems, may be used for limited, incidental personal purposes, provided that such use does not directly or indirectly interfere with DHS e-mail service, burden DHS or IHSC with noticeable incremental cost, or interfere with the user's employment or other obligations to IHSC.

**4-4. Prohibitions and Precautions.** The following activities and uses do not constitute official use of governmental communications systems and are therefore prohibited:

- a. Use for any unlawful purpose;
- b. Concealment or misrepresentation of names or affiliations in e-mail messages;
- c. Unauthorized access, alteration of source or destination addresses of e-mail, or misrepresentation of DHS e-mail systems and the messages contained therein;
- d. Initiating actions which interfere with the supervisory or accounting functions of the system, including attempts to obtain "system" privileges;
- e. Causing congestion of DHS social media systems by such things as the propagation of chain letters, broadcasting inappropriate messages (e.g., unsolicited personal views on social, political, religious, or other non-business matters) to lists or individuals, etc.;
- f. Use for any commercial purposes, for financial gain, or in support of "for profit" activities;
- g. Engaging in any activity that would discredit IHSC, including seeking, transmitting, collecting, or storing defamatory, discriminatory, obscene, harassing, or intimidating messages or material;

- h. Use for posting to external newsgroups, bulletin boards, or other public forums, unless it is an IHSC business-related requirement and appropriate official approvals have been obtained by the Assistant Director of IHSC;
- i. IHSC personnel are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites to the degree that their speech does not impair working relationships of this department for which loyalty and confidentiality are important, do not violate law or regulation, imply they are acting in their official capacity or use their official title, impede the performance of duties, impair discipline and harmony among coworkers, or negatively affect the public perception of the department;
- j. When using social media, IHSC personnel should be mindful that their speech becomes part of the worldwide electronic domain. Therefore, adherence to the ICE code of conduct is required in the personal use of social media. In particular, IHSC personnel are prohibited from the following:
  - i. Speech containing obscene or sexually explicit language, images, or acts and statements or other forms of speech that ridicule, malign, disparage, or otherwise express bias against any race, any religion, or any protected class of individuals; and
  - ii. Speech involving themselves or other IHSC personnel reflecting behavior that would reasonably be considered reckless or irresponsible.

**4-5. Effective E-mail Communication.** IHSC e-mail users must ensure that the basic elements of effective writing are present: clarity, brevity, and courtesy. Prior to being sent, all messages should be checked for both spelling and grammar. Acronyms and abbreviations should be limited to those that are of a common use nature and understood by the intended audience. Unprofessional language should not be used. Sarcasm and humor should be restricted, as these expressions could be misconstrued or misinterpreted. E-mails are the equivalent of letters sent on official letterhead, and must therefore be written in a professional and courteous tone. IHSC e-mail users should extend the professional courtesies below to individuals or groups as applicable:

- a. Follow the chain of command when sending messages forward. Courtesy copies should be sent only as necessary;
- b. Always include a pertinent subject title for the message and include your signature block (in accordance with procedures in the IHSC Headquarters and Field Orientation Guides) at the bottom of the e-mail message to ensure that all recipients can identify the originator;

- c. Be professional and careful whenever you write about others. Understand that e-mail is easily forwarded, and messages intended to remain private or personal may be subject to disclosure;
- d. Use a tone of address that is appropriate to the recipient; and
- e. E-mail, and other social media transmissions, may be subject to public disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and unless privileged, are subject to discovery in judicial or administrative proceedings.

**4-6. Activity During Personal Time.** While not on duty, IHSC employees are generally free to engage in personal online pursuits. If, however, the off-duty online activity on government issued or personal equipment directly and substantially relates to a work-related matter, personnel are bound by the same restrictions regarding the use of online information as would apply when on duty.

**4-7. Reporting Violations.** Personnel becoming aware of, or having knowledge of, a posting or of any website or web page in violation of the provision of this policy, shall notify his or her supervisor immediately for follow-up action.

**5. Procedures:** None other than as noted above.

**6. Historical Notes.** This directive replaces the Assistant Director's Program Operations Memorandum (OM 14-004) dated 10 March 2014 and IHSC Directive 01-22, *IHSC Email Usage*, dated 11/7/13. This directive changes title from *IHSC Email Usage* to *IHSC Use of Social Media*.

**7. Definitions.**

- 7-1. Blog:** A self-published diary or commentary on a particular topic that may allow visitors to post responses, reactions, or comments. The term is short for "Web log."
- 7-2. E-mail:** A system for sending messages from one individual to another via telecommunications links between computers or terminals.
- 7-3. Page:** The specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed, and managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.
- 7-4. Post:** Content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.
- 7-5. Profile:** Information that a user provides about himself or herself on a social networking site.

- 7-6. **Social Media:** A category of Internet-based resources that integrate user-generated content and user participation. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace), micro-blogging sites (Twitter, Nixie), photo- and video sharing sites (Flickr, YouTube), wikis (Wikipedia), blogs, and news sites (Digg, Reddit).
- 7-7. **Social Networks:** Online platforms where users can create profiles, share information, and socialize with others using a range of technologies.
- 7-8. **Speech:** Expression or communication of thoughts or opinions in spoken words, in writing, by expressive conduct, symbolism, photographs, videotape, or related forms of communication.
- 7-9. **Web 2.0:** The second generation of the World Wide Web focused on shareable, user-generated content, rather than static web pages. Some use this term interchangeably with social media.
- 7-10. **Wiki:** Web page(s) that can be edited collaboratively.

8. **Record Keeping.** IHSC e-mail messages determined to be federal records shall be governed by records management federal regulations and DHS MD- 141-01, "Records Management" directive pertaining to creation, maintenance, adequacy of documentation, recordkeeping requirements, records management responsibilities, records retention, and records disposition.
9. **No Privacy Act Statement.** This directive is an internal policy statement of IHSC. It is not intended to, and does not create, any rights, privileges, or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable against the United States; its departments, agencies, or other entities; its officers or employees; or any other person.